



**STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH**

**Contaminated Water**

Natural disasters such as hurricanes, tsunamis or floods can contaminate the public water supplies. Drinking contaminated water may cause illness. Do not assume that the water in an affected area is safe to drink.

Listen to public announcements by health officials to confirm the safety of municipal water supply. Even though water may be accessible, storm damage could have contaminated water lines.

Water wells need to be tested and disinfected after a major storm passes and the floodwaters recede. The public can call the Hawaii State Department of Health or the local water company for more information on the testing of water wells.

**Water for Drinking and Cooking**

Safe drinking water includes bottled, boiled, or treated water. Listen to public announcements regarding specific recommendations for boiling or treating drinking water in your area.

Here are some general rules concerning water for drinking and cooking. Remember:

- Do not use contaminated water to wash dishes, brush your teeth, wash and prepare food or make ice.
- Drink only bottled, boiled, or treated water until your supply is tested and found safe.
- Boiling water kills harmful bacteria and parasites. Bringing water to a rolling boil for 1 minute will kill most organisms.
- If you can not boil contaminated water, treat it with chlorine or iodine tablets, or by mixing 6 drops (1/8 teaspoon) of unscented household chlorine bleach (5.25 percent sodium hypochlorite) per gallon of water. Mix the solution thoroughly, and let stand for about 30 minutes. **This treatment will not kill parasitic organisms.**
- Containers for water should be rinsed with a bleach solution before reusing them. Use water storage tanks and other types of containers with caution.